

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

CHERYL SAGATAW, DEANTHONY
BARNES, ROBERTA STRONG, and
TRAVIS NELOMS, *on behalf of
themselves and a class of
similarly-situated individuals,*

Plaintiffs,

vs.

MAYOR JACOB FREY, *in his
individual and official capacity,*

Defendant.

Civil Action No.
0:24-cv-00001-ECT/TNL

**DECLARATION OF
LOLA HEGSTROM
IN SUPPORT OF
MOTION TO AMEND
OPERATIVE COMPLAINT
AND TO ADD PLAINTIFFS**

DECLARATION OF LOLA HEGSTROM

I, Lola Hegstrom, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declare as follows:

1. I am 41 years old. I am an enrolled member of Red Lake Nation.
2. I graduated high school and have some college education. I have kids but I don't have custody of them. According to a therapist I saw once and a test I took at Park Ave treatment, I was diagnosed with PTSD, severe depression, anxiety, and BPD. I also have lower back problems. I can't even sleep on a bed it hurts so bad. I've tried once, when visiting a friend, but I can't. I sleep sitting up in my chair, it's the only way I can sleep.
3. A few years ago, I was living with my aunt and helping take care of her, she couldn't do anything for herself because she had a walker. She was not treating me well, so eventually I made the tough decision to move out for my own sake. I've been homeless on the streets since then.
4. I had a chance once to get into Kola on Franklin, but I missed an appointment on Lake Street that I was supposed to go to in order to get into the housing program and I lost my spot.
5. Since becoming homeless, I have moved around a lot. For a while I was under the bridge by the train on Franklin, and then I moved to the wall of forgotten natives, and then when it was evicted I went to Nenookaasi.
6. Sometimes at Nenookaasi the neighbors were upset with us, but we never bothered anyone. Neighbors think they know what goes on in camps, or think that we bring crime, but drug use and crime are everywhere already in the neighborhood. We are getting blamed for causing what was already there to begin with.
7. At Nenookaasi, I felt a sense of community. Being around people that were going through a similar experience. I stayed by myself in a tent, but I still felt safe because of the people who were staying around me. I was evicted from Nenookaasi several times, and continued staying with the group because that safety and stability of knowing those people was really important to me. It's unsafe to be not at an encampment, and at other encampments besides Nenookaasi I really do not feel the same way. I don't like living in places where people are loud or fighting.
8. I was at Nenookaasi when the fire happened. I ran out with no shoes, no purse, I was panicked. It was so scary. I was sleeping, and I woke up to someone yelling "everyone out" and the noise of the fire. I ran right out. I was lucky I woke up when I did.

9. I was evicted from 28th and 14th Nenookaasi camp on July 25. The cops came at around 7 o'clock in the morning. They were telling us we had ten minutes to get our belongings and go, and that once we left we couldn't come back in. We had no notice beforehand, nobody came to tell us or leave a paper or anything that an eviction was coming.
10. Cops think that everything we own is stolen, so they think that it's OK to take it from us. I pay for my things, they are not stolen. But when we get evicted and we try to ask the cops for more time to take our stuff away, they say that it's not our stuff to begin with.
11. At these evictions, I have lost jewelry, clothes, my sleeping chair, tent, expensive purses I've had, nice shoes, toys for my kids, all my important paperwork, birth certificate, mental health papers about my diagnosis, an electric generator.
12. Nobody ever offered me storage, but I heard a rumor about the storage downtown so I went to check it out. It was barely anything, there wasn't enough space. I stored some clothes there, some paperwork, but not much else would fit. It would have been nice to store important stuff there, but I could only store one tote so most of my things I still had to keep with me anyway. Then I went and took all my stuff back out of storage because I needed it with me, like my clothes that I needed in order to wear them.
13. When evictions happen close together, like when we were evicted twice in three days last winter, there isn't time to get comfortable. It really impacts my mental health every time I have to move.
14. I wish that people knew what it was really like to live out here. People who have never been in our shoes, dealt with the trauma and hard experiences we've lived through, trying to tell us how to solve these problems, that doesn't work. The prejudice against us, we do not deserve that.

I declare under penalty of perjury that this declaration is true and correct.

Executed on September 13, 2024, in the City of Minneapolis, County of Hennepin, State of Minnesota, Treaty-Ceded Territory of the Dakota peoples.



LOLA HEGSTROM